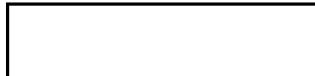


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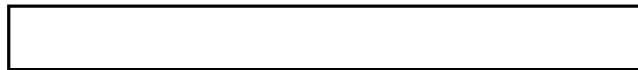


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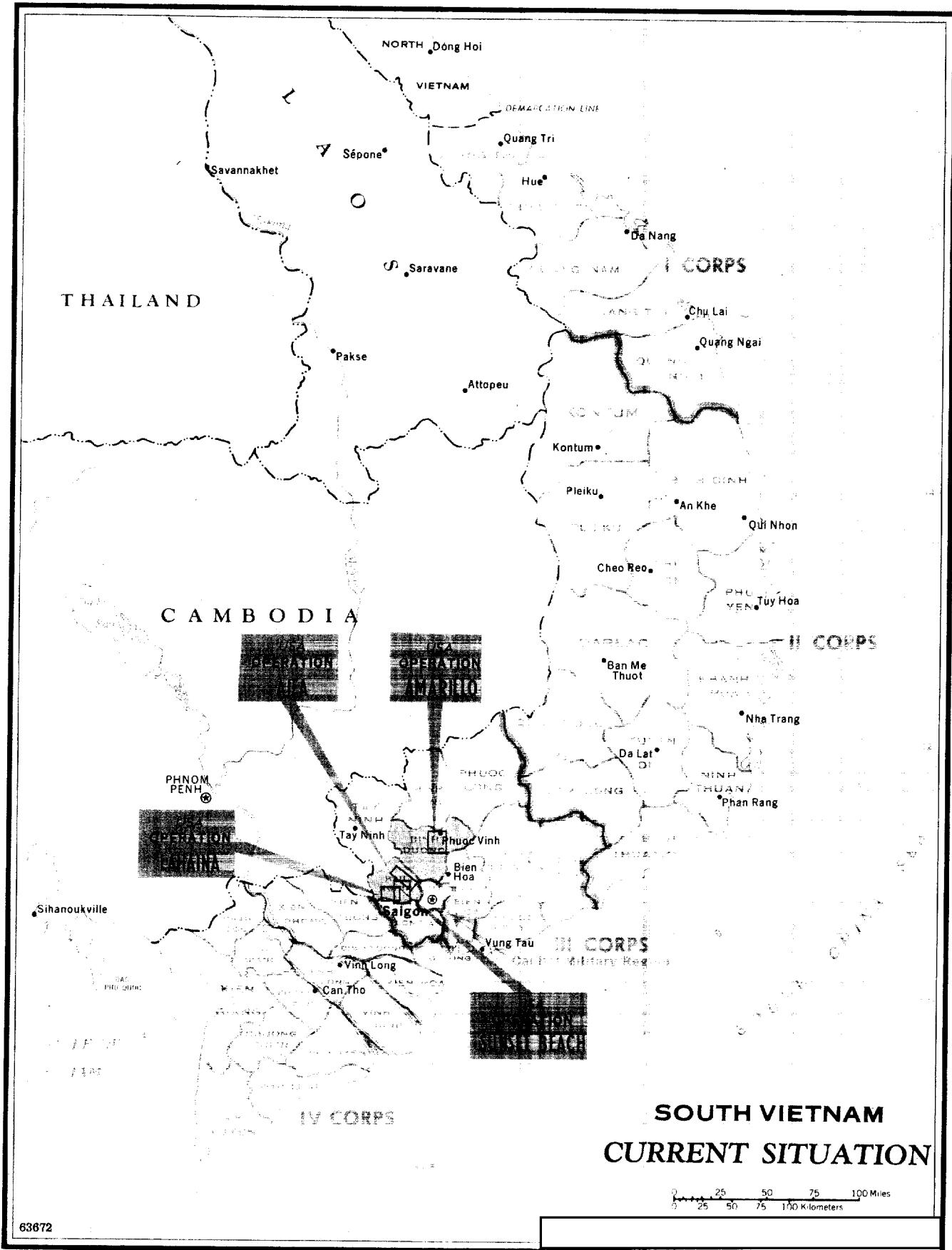
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*Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EDT)

Political Developments in South Vietnam: Chief of State Nguyen Van Thieu, talking to the press yesterday, dismissed General de Gaulle's Cambodian speech, denied any future presidential aspirations, and again called for an invasion of North Vietnam.

General Thieu called De Gaulle's speech "meaningless" and said the French President should direct his remarks to Hanoi. Thieu's denial of political ambitions--similar to earlier declarations by Premier Ky--could be intended as a conciliatory gesture to discourage a Buddhist boycott of the forthcoming constitutional assembly elections.

General Thieu's remarks advocating an invasion of the North in retaliation for the Communist infiltration of men and supplies into South Vietnam closely follows the recent Peoples Army Council communiqué recommending a similar course to the government. The US Embassy reports that the council, a purely advisory body, was asked by Premier Ky to consider the matter of the North Vietnamese violation of the Demilitarized Zone. The embassy believes that Ky has used this device, and Thieu's endorsement, to obtain a show of popular support for invasion in hopes of offsetting the adverse reaction abroad to similar opinions he himself recently expressed in a US magazine.

Military Situation in South Vietnam: No contact with enemy forces was reported yesterday in any of the allied operations currently under way.

Three US Army operations ended on 1 September in areas immediately west and north of Saigon. Operation AMARILLO, a route-clearing operation in Binh Duong Province, resulted in 102 Communists killed and six captured. Forty-three Americans were killed and 248 wounded in the ten-day operation. (See Map)

(continued)

Operations LAHAINA and AIEA, conducted by elements of the US 1st Infantry Division in Hau Nghia Province, resulted in 51 Viet Cong killed and 58 captured. American casualties for these two operations totaled five killed and three wounded. (See Map)

Units of this division began a multibattalion search-and-destroy operation in Hau Nghia Province yesterday. This operation, code-named SUNSET BEACH, will be conducted in an area where the 269th Viet Cong Battalion--with a strength of 500 men--is believed to be located. [redacted]

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UK-Rhodesia: Commonwealth leaders meeting in London next week are expected to demand that Britain take tougher action against the rebellious Rhodesian regime.

Zambia will lead the attack, demanding that Britain use force if necessary. Zambia will also seek a promise from the British not to grant independence to Rhodesia until it establishes effective majority rule. London is unwilling to make either commitment and, according to the US Embassy in London, will yet again ask for more time to allow economic sanctions to work.

Even moderate African leaders now seem out of patience with the policy of economic sanctions. Those who oppose the use of force will propose that Britain ask the United Nations to make sanctions mandatory. Such a course would lead to a clash with South Africa, which London remains eager to avoid.

Zambia, Tanzania, and Sierra Leone have threatened to leave the Commonwealth if their demands are not met. British officials hope the Africans will settle for a compromise to avoid a final rupture which would be economically costly to them. Even so, the fact that Commonwealth members are split on racial lines over Rhodesia will be clear to all participants. The resulting bitterness is likely to exacerbate the growing division within the Commonwealth and further undermine Britain's influence in Africa.

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Belgium - Congo (Kinshasa): Brussels has decided to pursue a conciliatory policy in its relations with the Congo.

Foreign Minister Harmel has secured approval for moderation from the cabinet and the legislature's Foreign Affairs Committee, despite public pressure for a strong line against the Mobutu government.

Brussels wants to maintain its technical aid in education, health, and rural development. Military and police aid will be advisory rather than operational, however, and in any case will be reduced to earlier levels.

Belgian financial losses caused by a Congolese refusal to honor existing agreements would be recouped from military and police aid funds and would result in even greater cuts in military and police assistance. The Congo's army and police contingents have rarely been able to function without foreign leadership.

Meanwhile, the Belgians are considering rejecting the appointment of Kinshasa's new Minister-resident Diaka, who they believe was photographed mistreating Belgians in the early 1960s. A rejection would cause a new flare-up in Belgo-Congolese relations. [redacted]

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Dahomey: An attempt by the Soglo regime to impose austerity measures is generating serious political agitation.

France has insisted that Dahomey make serious efforts to reduce its budgetary deficit if crucial French aid is to be continued. Salary cuts, reductions of family allowances, and new taxes were met with resentment when they were first announced on 12 August, and the government agreed to establish a committee to study the issue and report back 2 September. In the meantime, agitation has continued and leaders of several key groups have been arrested. If the austerity measures are retained, a general strike might ensue.

The crucial question at the moment appears to be whether the army, hard hit by the proposed cut in family allowances, will hold together in support of the regime.

The US Embassy believes the Soglo government is still strong enough to ride out the crisis, partly because no opposition leader has yet emerged. However, its position will be weakened whether it backs down or carries out the austerity program.

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United Nations: Many representatives at the UN believe that Secretary General Thant might agree to remain in office at least for a shortened term if a suitable successor cannot be found.

Many members of the UN Secretariat believe that Thant wants to avoid a serious crisis over the leadership, although he sincerely wants to quit. Many also believe that he would delay responding to an appeal to remain, hoping that the Security Council could find a replacement for him. If a major crisis appears unavoidable, Thant is expected to remain.

Some members of the Security Council prefer not to hold an early meeting of the Council, believing that informal consultations would be more fruitful. Afro-Asian delegates are in agreement that it would not be "fitting" for the Council to put pressure on Thant through formal action.

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NOTES

Laos: The National Assembly's vote on a motion of no confidence in Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma's government has been postponed until at least next week. Although the majority of the deputies remain hostile to Souvanna, military leaders have been exerting pressure in his behalf and the government is expected to weather the vote. The prospect of victory has reinforced Souvanna's determination not to conciliate those civilian politicians angling for a larger role in government affairs.

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